



DELAWARE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
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To: Newsroom Directors and Assignment Editors

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Delaware has a new State Veterinarian **Dr. Heather Hirst has accepted the position**

Heather Hirst, DVM, MS has accepted the position as State Veterinarian with the Delaware Department of Agriculture. She is replacing Dr. Sara Busch who left the position in March of 2008. As State Veterinarian, Dr. Hirst will be the administrator of the Animal Health and Food Products Inspection Section that has the following responsibilities:

- Protecting the health of domestic animal and avian species from the introduction and spread of infectious and contagious diseases, including those transmissible to humans.
- Assuring that domestic meat and poultry products distributed to consumers are safe, wholesome, unadulterated, and honestly and informatively labeled.
- Providing grading services to poultry plants, shell egg plants, fruit and vegetable growers, and brokers, through cooperative agreements with the United States Department of Agriculture.
- Enforcing [Chapter 35 of the Delaware Code, Delaware Egg Law](#) (retail store inspection).



Dr. Hirst received her Bachelor of Science degree from Rutgers University, her Doctor of Veterinarian Medicine degree from Ohio State University, and her Masters Degree in Clinical Sciences from Colorado State University. For the last two years Dr. Hirst been employed by Intervet, Inc of Millsboro, DE. Her primary duties are the review and approval of adverse event reports for submission to FDA and EPA, the two regulatory authorities responsible for monitoring pharmaceutical products available on the US market.

Dr. Hirst's veterinary experience includes:

- Three years as a dairy cattle practitioner in California, with an emphasis on control of mastitis and other infectious diseases. According to Dr. Hirst, one of her greatest interests was in the instruction of dairy managers and employees in best production practices.
- Five years of veterinary consulting and field research on large dairies in Colorado while employed as a research associate at Colorado State University. Her focus was the development of control strategies for Johne's disease, Salmonella, and contagious mastitis pathogens.

-More-

- Two years of private dairy cattle practice and consulting in Delaware on a part time basis to provide relief work for a local large animal veterinarian.

Regarding the State Veterinarian position, Dr. Hirst said, “I am looking forward with great anticipation to join the Delaware Department of Agriculture Team this October. I will use my knowledge and skills in every effort toward the preservation of public health and animal welfare. I have always been on a personal mission to promote agriculture, especially to our youth. It is my belief that, in order to preserve agriculture, we must promote its image with the public. The foundation of a positive image is the implementation of best management practices to maintain and improve the health of our animal populations.”

Dr. Hirst will join the Delaware Department of Agriculture on October 14, 2008.

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